

PARTIAL TRANSCRIPTION - ORIGINAL FOLLOWS

Dear Foy:

Since the sharpening of the Berlin crisis on August 13, there have been several developments more or less behind the scenes in NATO which I should report. In general these developments revolve around Stikker; so I will go primarily into detail about the positive and negative aspects of his activities. Although I start out by giving the negative side, I wish to make it clear that the basic objective of this letter is to let you know that, despite some of the behind-the-scenes grumblings of Stikker and others, the Secretary General has been from our point of view very effective in his work with the Council.

I am sure Ambassador Finletter has informed you of several talks he had with Stikker in which the latter expressed considerable concern about the future of NATO unless more substance could be breathed into it and more meaningful consultations could take place.
[two lines excised]

In connection with the need for better consultation, he has alluded to the fact that he believes some members of the alliance might like an excuse to get out of their commitments and might even endeavor to do so unless they can again be convinced of the value of the Alliance to them. This Stikker seems to believe can be done primarily by continually giving

effective . . .

The Honorable
Foy D. Kohler
Chairman, Berlin Task Force,
Department of State,
Washington, D.C.

Sir Horace
St. Kev.

Aug 61

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Dear Toy:

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The Exorable
Toy D. Keeling,
Chairman, Berlin Task Force,
Department of State,
Washington 25, D.C.

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effective arguments to currently explain Big Three policies and allowing the Council to give meaningful comments thereon before decisions are taken.

In this general connection, he has reiterated on several occasions that he and others were quite displeased that it was not possible to have a liaison officer from the International Staff attached to the Working Group in Paris. His and others' concern on this score has been heightened when they learned that the Ambassadorial Steering Group had set up sub-committees to study various problems such as economic counter-measures, psychological warfare, etc. (POLTO 211). Stikker asked me with some feeling whether the setting up of such sub-committees did not usurp NATO prerogatives. He added he and others fear that the Council would not be consulted on these questions but would be asked merely to approve agreed decisions. I told him I was sure this would not be the case and that NATO would have a chance to discuss and comment on ideas developed in Washington, but of course it would be essential that the Council act expeditiously if it expects its comments to be given consideration in the fast-developing situation.

Stikker and others nevertheless have inferred they fear that, as far as the other 11 are concerned, the Council will become more-or-less a rubber stamp. To give you an idea of his and the feeling of some Representatives on this score, I am enclosing a memorandum of conversation I had with Stikker on August 19 and an outline of a discussion which took place at a luncheon given by Stikker for three of the Representatives on August 22. The memo on the luncheon was written by George Vest, who was present, and was given to me with Stikker's permission. You will note the considerable concern expressed about the lack of consultation with NATO.

I am told that past experience of prior consultation among the Three has all too often taken so long, because of inability of the Three to agree, that the time for real consultation in NATO is neglected, and NATO is often faced with a virtual fait accompli or a demand for an exchange of views within 34 or 48 hours. Stikker does have a duty to remind us thereof, for the United States alone can keep "Inner Circle" operations compatible with

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NATO consultation. We, of course, realize the time-consuming delays of the consultations but must continue to urge that the need for them is real if we want the Alliance to continue to be the backbone of our policy in Europe at least.

Being fairly new here, I am not sure whether he is being a squeaky wheel in order to build up his own prestige and stature, or whether he is in fact deeply concerned as he indicates. On balance I would guess it is a bit of both, with sincere concern being uppermost. I say this because I have definitely noticed the feeling of frustration on the part on several of the Representatives, which I am sure Stikker shares to a considerable degree.

Based on reports I have had from General Norstad and from my own conversations with him, Stkker seems to feel that in his early talks with the Secretary the latter had "assured" Stikker that we would show him practically every message, policy or discussion paper which comes into the Mission and would let him in on almost all our deliberations before establishing policies. Ambassador Finletter has gone as far as he could to keep Stikker advised, but obviously there are limits. In order to be as helpful as we could in this matter, we recently assigned George Vest, one of the stars in our political section to the International Secretariat.

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Being fairly new here, I am not of course able to evaluate Stikker's motive fully. I am not sure whether he is being a squeaky wheel in order to build up his own prestige and stature, or whether he is in fact deeply concerned as he indicates. On balance I would guess it is a bit of both, with sincere concern being uppermost. I say this because I have definitely noticed the feeling of frustration on the part of several of the Representatives, which I am sure Stikker shares to a considerable degree.

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On this score, I understand that on August 20 when Stikker went to see his old friend General Morstad, the latter tried to bring some reality into Stikker's thinking by stating that of course we would keep him as informed as we possibly could, but that naturally there were limits to which we could go and in some cases it was even against the law to pass on information to other than cleared Americans. I am sure that the General's heart-to-heart talk with Stikker has done a great deal of good. This seems to have been borne out by the very effective way he handled the Council on August 21 when we discussed the military build-up prospects.

Another problem has arisen in connection with calling emergency Council meetings. Stikker went on leave just after all of you returned to Washington and did not return

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until the 19th. In the interim, the Berlin crisis boiled over in a big way, and Casardi, at the request of the Norwegians and ourselves, called an informal private meeting of Council members on the 14th to exchange preliminary views (POLTO 170).

[17 lines excised]

Now to give the positive side. Although Stikker has been blowing off steam to the Ambassador, to General Norstad, and blew off an awful lot of steam in my direction during the past ten days, he has, as reported in my POLTO CIRC 8, been most effective in guiding, pressuring and bringing the Council around to adopting attitudes, points of view and taking action which coincides basically with our desires. For my money I don't care how much he blows off if he produces, and I've learned he eventually listens to reason. I want to emphasize this point, since in our telegrams, which must be more or less factual, it is difficult to get the full flavor of how the Chair handled the situation. For instance, in order to bring the Council to a realistic evaluation of the situation caused by the latest Berlin developments, Stikker consulted with General Norstad, with me, as well as others, and basically bought the suggestions we had made and, as a matter of fact, contributed materially to the effectiveness of the operation. He obviously did his homework, laid his plans well, and then smoothly worked the discussion so that a minimum of resistance and palaver ensued. Stikker has been so effective in my estimation that I made a particular point of congratulating him most sincerely.

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If he should come to Washington next month (POLTO 212), I thought it would be useful to you to have this background, and I am sure the Ambassador will have more to add to it after he returns next week. In other words, despite his huffing and puffing, he has been very effective in pressuring the Council to take some positive action as suggested by the Secretary on August 8, and I believe that the devotion he has shown to the bigger picture will continue to control his actions in the direction we hope for.

Sincerely yours,
Elbridge Durbrow

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- 5 -

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Sincerely yours,

Elbridge Durbrow

Enclosures 2, a/n

cc: Mr. Fessenden, EUR/RA
General Norstad

CM: EDurbrow

ES Files (2)

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Mr. Wolf

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Date: August 19, 1961

Participants: Mr. Durbrow - A/CM USRO

Mr. Dirk Stikker - Secretary-General of NATO

Mr. Aubrey Casardi - Deputy Secretary-General of NATO

Subject: Berlin Developments

Copies to: RA - Mr. Fessenden

A/CM - Mr. Durbrow

USRO/POL - Mr. Wolf

USRO/Files

I met with Mr. Stikker in the latter's office prior to the special August 19 NAC meeting that afternoon. After apologizing to Mr. Stikker for bringing him back to Paris sooner than he had contemplated, I outlined the developments in connection with the reinforcement of the U.S. garrison in Berlin and explained in detail the composition of the battle group and the timing of its movement to West Berlin. I emphasized that the U.S. had planned to give the Council prior notification of the President's decision but unfortunately a leak had made it necessary for the White House to put out the announcement last evening. I assured the Secretary-General that the U.S. was most desirous of consulting with the Council on all matters affecting NATO prior to taking decisions but, because of fast moving events, it is not always possible to do so.

In response to Mr. Stikker's question regarding other actions taken or being considered in the Washington Steering Group, I referred briefly to the protest notes currently being considered by the Ambassadorial Group for submission to Moscow and to its continuing consideration of various other matters including the TTD ban, indicating, however, that no firm decisions have as yet been made. I also mentioned that sub-committees to study economic countermeasures and psychological action problems had been set up in order to advise the Steering Group as to what actions might be taken in those fields.

Mr. Stikker expressed considerable surprise at the setting up of sub-committees to study these matters which, to him, meant that the Steering Group was usurping NATO prerogatives and would probably come up with agreed solutions which would be communicated to NATO only after they had been finalized. In this connection, he pointed out the fact that the decisions to reinforce the British and U.S. garrisons in Berlin were taken without either consultation or prior notification to the NAC.

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Mr. Stikker then referred to the Secretary's August 8 statement on the NATO military build-up. He asked what we wanted in suggesting that the NATO powers raise their forces to MC-70 goals, whether we were thinking in terms of the 1960, '61 or '62 goals. He further said MC-70 goals were no longer considered as valid by the military who were now aiming at '66 goals as contained in MC-96. I replied that it was my understanding that the Secretary, not wanting to go into details of the military build-up, had mentioned MC-70 as it contained goals all had agreed and could understand in terms of the efforts to be made in view of the Berlin crisis. While MC-70 and MC-96 goals were not the same, the fleshing out of conventional forces along the lines of MC-70 would contribute to the attainment of MC-96 goals, which were not yet agreed, and fit in with the long-range planning now before the NAC.

Mr. Stikker, turning the conversation back to the problem of consultation in NATO, stated that little attention had been paid to deliberations of the NATO committees that had been studying economic countermeasures for a long time. To the contrary, discussions of this matter had been transferred to other committees in Bonn and Washington with adverse implications for consultation in NATO. He expressed concern regarding the reactions of the other eleven members of NATO if the four big powers continued to take decisions without proper consultation. He agreed with Mr. Casardi's comment that there are several NATO members who would like to find an excuse for leaving the organization because of their doubts whether their best interests are served by membership in the Alliance.

Mr. Stikker then asked whether NATO would really be consulted about "Live Oak" planning. I replied that the suggestion to bring this planning into the SHAPE area was receiving favorable consideration by the responsible powers and I assured that the NAC would be consulted in connection with "Live Oak" plans before they were finalized. Mr. Stikker expressed doubt that there would be real consultation in NATO and suggested that the NAC might be bypassed with a few dissertations on contingency planning.

I assured Mr. Stikker again, as I did throughout the conversation, that we had every intention and desire to consult in NATO on pertinent matters but that exceptions did crop up from time to time that could not be helped. I expressed the hope that at the August 21 NAC meeting, "two-way street" consultation would get into full swing, adding that any ideas NATO countries might have on economic countermeasures or psychological action would be more than welcome by the Steering Group sub-committees in Washington.

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Mr. Stikker concluded the conversation by saying that he would not be too hard on us at the afternoon Council meeting (which he wasn't).

Comment: Based on reports which I had received of conversations among Mr. Stikker, General Norstad, Mr. Casardi and Mr. Vest, I was not surprised to find Mr. Stikker in a very pessimistic mood. He did not appear to be very much impressed by my statements that in certain rapidly moving situations it is sometimes necessary to take immediate actions which preclude prior consultation. Mr. Stikker was difficult either because he was genuinely concerned over the lack of consultation or because he was trying to build up a case for bringing the Secretary-General more fully "into the know" on developments.

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